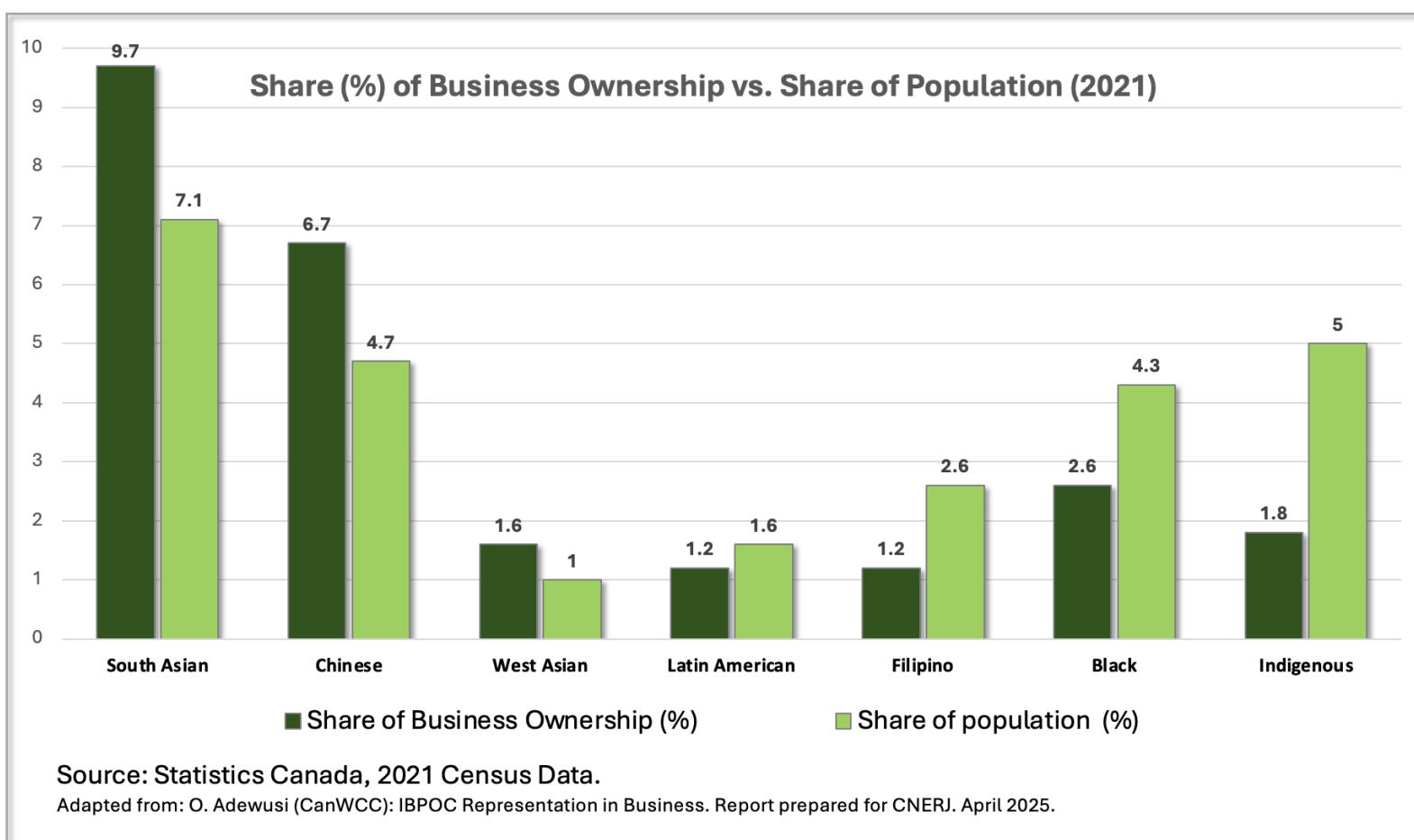


Social Indicators of Disparity for Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (IBPOC): Representation in Business

Oluwatosin Adewusi, Canadian Women's Chamber of Commerce (2025). Link to full text of report: <https://bit.ly/4mZFjTi>.

Deep Disparities Between Racial Groups

- IBPOC entrepreneurs own **28.2% of businesses**, close to their population share (31.6%).
- **BUT:** Disaggregated data **comparing business ownership share with population share** reveal stark **underrepresentation of specific racial groups**



Share in Business Ownership vs. Share in Canadian Population

Most overrepresented

- South Asians (9.7% vs. 7.1%)
- Chinese (6.7% vs. 4.7%)

Most underrepresented

- Blacks: 1.5% vs. 4.3%
- Indigenous: 1.8% vs. 5%

Most affected:

Women and disabled IBPOC entrepreneurs are facing additional barriers to business ownership.

Growth Without Equity

- IBPOC ownership grew +12.1% (2019–2021), **surpassing non-IBPOC** growth.
- **BUT:** Most remain small, non-employer businesses in low-revenue sectors (transportation, warehousing, hospitality) and generate **less than \$30,000** in annual revenue

Financial and Network Exclusion

- **Barriers to financing:** Over 80% of IBPOC rely on personal funds; less than 1% access venture capital
- **Barriers to development:** Limited access to mentorship, business networks, and culturally relevant development resources compound inequities



Targeted & culturally relevant government policy interventions are needed to improve capital access, networks and development for underrepresented IBPOC groups.

Recommendations: 4 Pillars of Support

Expand Equitable Access to Capital

- 1. Grow Targeted Loan Programs:** Expand programs such as the Black Entrepreneurship Loan Fund (BELF) and Indigenous Growth Fund (IGF) to offer flexible, low-interest loans with fewer collateral requirements.
- 2. Recognize Informal Credit Systems:** Accept alternative ways of assessing credit that reflect lending traditions common in immigrant communities.
- 3. Improve Financial Literacy:** Provide culturally relevant financial education to help people feel confident using formal lending systems.
- 4. Simplify Applications:** Make it easier to apply for government-backed financing.
- 5. Encourage Private Sector Support:** Use government incentives and accountability tools to motivate banks and investors to fund IBPOC-owned businesses.

Community-Based Networks

- 1. Support IBPOC Business Organizations:** Increase funding for IBPOC-led chambers of commerce, incubators, and accelerators.
- 2. Create Networking Opportunities:** Host events and mentorship programs that connect IBPOC entrepreneurs with investors and advisors.
- 3. Develop Digital Hubs:** Build accessible online platforms for peer learning, collaboration, and access to capital.
- 4. Offer Intersectional Programs:** Design initiatives that address the unique barriers faced by IBPOC women, disabled entrepreneurs, and immigrants.

Targeted Skill Development

- 1. Expand Training Programs:** Fund community-based programs that teach core business skills, digital tools, and leadership development.
- 2. Localize Outreach:** Use multilingual and culturally relevant communication to build trust and boost participation.
- 3. Support Small and Mid-Sized Businesses:** Ensure training programs meet the needs of IBPOC-led small and mid-sized businesses.

Policy & Data Collection Practices

- 1. Remove Barriers:** Change eligibility rules that exclude non-citizen entrepreneurs, including permanent residents and refugees.
- 2. Track Outcomes:** Require the collection of race-based and intersectional data to guide funding and measure progress.
- 3. Consult Communities:** Work with IBPOC communities when designing supports for entrepreneurship.